Kentucky's Adolescent Literacy Work Plan

The Kentucky Board of Education is a statewide leader in focusing the efforts of adolescent literacy development in the Kentucky Department of Education, local school districts and partners in public education. The KBE is committed to all children reaching proficiency in reading and writing and to all children performing at high levels through quality teaching and administration and a strong and supportive environment.

Teacher Preparation/Certification

A major finding of the NASBE study group responsible for the report, *Reading at Risk: The State Response to the Crisis in Adolescent Literacy*, is that a key way to target improvement in literacy skills is to teach them within the context of core academic subjects, rather than apart from challenging content instruction. In order to achieve this goal effectively, teacher preparation and training must be revised to include standards addressing reading and content literacy instruction so that students have access to the best prepared practitioners. This would include specific coursework in literacy for pre-service teachers in all content areas, as well as professional development opportunities in literacy for practicing teachers.

Schools and teachers will also require help in diagnosing students' reading deficiencies, implementing appropriate interventions, and assessing and monitoring progress toward goals. Additionally, the state needs to encourage more teachers to become certified reading specialists to meet the needs of our most struggling students. In Kentucky, a teacher must have a K-12 Reading/Writing Endorsement in order to teach a reading intervention class at the secondary level. Currently, there are 682 teachers with credentials in this area, but only 110 are currently teaching at the middle or high school level. There are 617 Reading courses reported, according to the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB), but courses counted as reading intervention classes are not specified.

Additionally, schools and teachers will need resources and staff to support implementation of literacy plans and strategies. Recent work to revise principal preparation, redesign master's programs, establish teacher leadership networks, and restructure secondary are among those initiatives that relate to fulfilling the resources and staffing needs required to meet our goals.

Task Force Recommendations:
1. Increase competency of pre-service teachers in reading theory and practice across all content areas, grades 4-12.
2. Increase competency of pre-service teachers across all content areas in literacy strategies, grades 4-12.
3. Provide endorsements and certifications for literacy coaching and literacy leadership.
4. Provide incentives to increase the number of certified Reading Specialists and provide emergency certifications while teachers are earning certifications.
5. Model research-based literacy strategies within post-secondary classrooms.

Goal: 1. Increase competency in reading theory and practice of all pre-service teachers who are seeking certification for grades 4-12.

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
1.1 Incorporate current research-based reading theory, instruction and practice into pre-service and advanced practitioner course requirements course requirements for all teacher candidates, grades 4-12	1.1a Identify and report to the EPSB Board and KBE the number of undergraduate programs requiring reading theory and practice course(s) and/or embedded content within degree programs for teachers, grades 4-12. 1.1b Develop a plan to address those programs not identified in 1.1a 1.1c Initiate plan to increase the number of degree programs requiring reading theory and practice courses and/or embedded content	1.1a December 2008 1.1b Spring 2009 1.1c Fall 2010	EPSB CPE Institutions of higher education
1.2 Incorporate literacy strategies instruction into pre-service course requirements for all secondary teacher candidates	1.2a Partner higher education literacy faculty with arts and science educators to engage in professional growth/study focused on research-based literacy strategies 1.2b Create an on-line network via Blackboard to share literacy strategy resources and provide professional follow-up support for strategy 1.2a 1.2c Offer courses/modules on adolescent literacy available through KY virtual schools 1.2d Measure competency through pre- and post-assessments	1.2a Summer 2009 1.2b Fall 2009 1.2c Fall 2008	CCLD Institutions of Higher Education CCLD and KDE

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
1.3 Incorporate the integration of literacy strategies into content area methods instruction as a requirement for all 4-12 teacher candidates.	1.3a Develop a measure to determine competency 1.3b Increase competency with multiple experiences in literacy courses and content methods courses 1.3c Measure competency through pre- and post-assessments	1.3a Fall 2010 1.3b Fall 2010 1.3c Fall 2010	

Goal: 2. Increase opportunities for teachers to receive endorsements and certifications for literacy coaching and literacy leadership.

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
2.1 Redesign masters programs for literacy coaching and literacy leadership opportunities.	2.1a Partner with institutions of higher education and EPSB to create teacher leadership certification programs that allow for a focus on literacy coaching and literacy leadership 2.1b Survey current literacy leadership programs available thru KY colleges/universities for pre-service grade 4-12 2.1c Communicate endorsement and certification opportunities to literacy teachers	2.1a Spring 2009 2.1b Fall 2008 2.1c Summer 2009	Institutions of Higher Education EPSB KDE

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
2.3 Provide tuition/loan forgiveness for teachers who obtain reading specialist certification and work for four years in a KY public school with adolescent learners	2.3a Advertise through public service announcements (television, radio), listservs and the KDE website opportunities for tuition/loan forgiveness	(2.3-2.5 to be explored next meeting)	
2.4 Allow emergency certification for secondary teachers who are enrolled in reading specialist programs	2.4b Require evidence of coursework related to reading specialist program requirements	Fall 2009	EPSB
2.5 Develop reading specialist programs to be delivered through regional cadre sessions	2.5a Partner with institutions to create school-site programs for teachers and administrators	Fall 2009	Institutions of Higher Education CCLD

Professional Development

In addition to teacher preparation and certification, practicing teachers need on-going, job-embedded professional development in order to implement literacy instruction across the content areas. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education report, *Literacy Instruction in the Content Areas,* "Inasmuch as the academic content areas comprise the heart of the secondary school curriculum, content literacy instruction must be a cornerstone of any movement to build the high-quality secondary schools that young people deserve and on which the nation's social and economic health will depend." The report goes on to say that "reading and writing are more than just basic skills that permit students to go on and study advanced subject matter; reading and writing are also the very stuff from which the academic content areas are made." Professional development supported by school leadership is a key way to increase teacher competency in this area.

Task Force Recommendations:
6. Provide professional development in literacy and learning strategies.
7. Provide professional development in literacy strategies to enhance content learning.
8. Provide professional development in literacy team planning and implementation.
9. Provide professional development to literacy coaches, grades 4-12, and incentives to schools to provide coaches.
10. Train state coaches in order to provide support to schools on a regional basis.
11. Develop and provide online professional development and courses in literacy.

Goal 3: Increase teacher competency in literacy practices to enhance content learning.

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
3.1 Ensure a cohesive vision to content literacy training for teachers and administrators	3.1a Collaborate with KDE network liaisons to share literacy strategies and resources with content networks	3.1a Fall 2008	KDE
	3.1b Incorporate literacy strategies into teacher networks	3.1b Spring 2009	
	3.1c Model units and lessons that incorporate content literacy strategies and 21st Century Skills	3.1c Ongoing	
	3.1d Build a support structure for literacy leadership (classroom, school, district, region, state)	3.1d Ongoing	

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
	3.1e Develop methods to evaluate impact/effectiveness of professional development implementation	3.1e Summer 2009	
3.2 Establish a KY literacy coaching network with co-op literacy specialists serving as regional state coaches	3.2a Organize a literacy coaching strand at KTLC 2009	Fall 2008	KDE
3.3 Develop courses/modules on adolescent literacy available through KY virtual schools	3.3a Partner with higher education to develop and offer graduate credit	Spring 2009	KDE CPE Institutions of higher education KET
3.4 Offer incentives to schools to provide literacy coaches and literacy specialists at the secondary level	3.4a Work with the legislature to fund opportunities	Fall 2008	

Goal 4: Train and support schools/districts in literacy planning and implementation.

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
4.1 Collaborate with partner schools and districts to provide professional development in literacy team planning and implementation	4.1a Publish Literacy PERKS to guide teams in decision making 4.1b Identify partners from ALCP, KCLC and KCLI 4.1c Provide training and follow-up for all partner schools and districts 4.1d Communicate literacy plan requirement to administration organizations (e.g., KLA, KASA)	4.1a Fall 2008 4.1b Fall 2008 4.1c Spring 2009 4.1d Spring 2009	KDE

Instructional Resources

As pre-service and practicing teachers gain skill in integrating literacy into the content areas, they will need resources to develop capacity in the schools in order to support implementation. And while it is useful for teachers and students to know and use a set of general literacy strategies, it is not enough in order for students to navigate the difficult content-specific texts they encounter in the various subjects. According to Alvermann and Moore and other literacy researchers, not all literacy skills can be transferred easily from one field to another. Resources are a key way to support implementation.

Task Force Recommendations:
12. Provide literacy resources (e.g., instructional CDs/DVDs, print materials) to schools.
13. Extend time for literacy by embedding literacy strategies in all academic areas and through cross-discipline units of study.
14. Target literacy instruction for struggling readers through access to teachers who are highly trained in literacy instruction, assessments and interventions.
15. Utilize reading clinics associated with institutions of higher education.
16. Encourage schools to provide students with access to a wide variety of reading materials.

Goal 5: Increase student and teacher access to literacy resources.

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
5.1 Publish current literacy resource CDs and DVDs through the KYVS	5.1a Work with Virtual/Secondary staff to format, store and post resources in KYVS	Fall 2008	KDE
5.2 Create a resource section on the KDE literacy website to link adolescent literacy resources	5.2a Reorganize Literacy section of KDE website and update resources on adolescent literacy	Fall 2008	KDE
5.3 Support highly trained literacy teachers as they facilitate KYVS courses for struggling readers	5.3a Provide training as KYVS course facilitators	Fall 2009	KDE
5.4 Increase the number of reading specialists serving at the secondary level	5.4a Identify critical policy supports at institutional and state level for successful scale up 5.4b Build buy-in "ground up" from a small number of pilot sites	5.4a Ongoing 5.4b Spring 2009	Institutions of Higher Education EPSB KDE

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
5.5 Collaborate with library media specialists, KRA, and other organizations to provide information on and access to wide reading	5.5a Provide access/information on wide reading through the KDE literacy resource website	5.5a Spring 2009	KDE KRA
	5.5b Offer mini-grants to schools for purchasing adolescent reading materials	5.5b Fall 2008	
	5.5c Establish high expectations for summer reading programs	5.5 c Spring 2009	
	5.5d Encourage schools to include a budget for technology media and print media to support reading instruction	5.5d Ongoing	
	5.5e Highlight models for collaboration between school and public libraries as well as with colleges and universities	5.5e Ongoing	
	5.5f develop opportunities for students to have access to reading resources before, during and after school and during the summer	5.5f Fall 2009	
	5.5g Collaborate between local bookstores/businesses to bring authors to schools	5.5 g Ongoing	
5.6 Provide access to resources for stakeholders	5.6a Involve library media specialists in the planning and instruction of cross-disciplinary units of study	5.6 a Ongoing	
	5.6b Develop collaboration between library media specialists and grade level teams for planning and instruction	5.6b Ongoing	

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
	5.6c Educate parents on the benefits of reading	5.6c Ongoing	
	5.6d Encourage schools to have a summer reading program with activities for accountability	5.6 d Spring 2009-Ongoing	
	5.6e Ensure students have access to reading resources on their independent and instructional level	5.6e Ongoing	
	5.6f Have a centralized collection of resources in the school and/or district for teachers	5.6f Ongoing	
5.7 Provide students with access to support systems to encourage literacy skills	5.7a Develop programs for college students to volunteer in schools to work with students on reading and writing	5.7a Spring 2009-Ongoing	
	5.7b Create programs for high school students to mentor younger students	5.7b Ongoing	
	5.7c Create programs for community volunteers to mentor middle and high school students	5.7c Ongoing	
	5.7d Develop celebrations to recognize reading and writing of students	5.7d Ongoing	

Data Informed Decision Making

Assessments, including diagnostic, formative and summative, are essential in informing instruction to meet students' individual needs. Adjustments to instruction based on data ensure that student learning is on track to meet learning goals. Kentucky is well posed to meet many of these needs through Individualized Learning Plans, a data system to track student performance, and intervention requirements to meet College Readiness Standards, but schools will need information and support in designing informal and formal assessments to diagnose and monitor students. Kentucky can also use data from initiatives such as Striving Readers and the Adolescent Literacy Coaching Project to inform decisions.

Task Force Recommendations:
17. Use diagnostic and formative assessments, including determining students' reading levels in content areas, to inform instruction.
18. Use data (including Explore, PLAN and ACT) to determine interventions needed for students, including those not meeting college readiness standards.
19. Use Individualized Learning Plans (grades 6-12) to differentiate instruction and meet individual learning needs and goals.

Goal 6: Use multiple sources of data to determine and monitor student literacy needs.

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
6.1 Clarify the process and value of formative assessment among KY educators and other stakeholders (17, 18)	6.1a Establish a common understanding of formative assessment strategies among KDE-based staff and field staff	6.1a Fall 2008	KDE Measured Progress
	6.1b Provide formative assessment training and support resources through KYVS	6.1b Fall 2009	
	6.1c Support/assist schools and districts in using data to develop and implement literacy plans	6.1c Spring 2009	
	6.1d articulate to stakeholders how and why teachers do formative assessments	6.1d Fall 2009	
6.2 Provide information and resources regarding universal screening and progress monitoring in literacy	6.2a Identify universal screening tools and progress monitoring processes	6.2 a Fall 2008	KDE

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
	6.2.b Build data infrastructure across secondary schools	6.2b Ongoing	
6.3 Inform schools and districts of alignment between college readiness standards and KY Program of Studies	6.3a Publish combined CRS/POS document on KDE website and include information in network newsletters, email from the Commissioner and other avenues	Fall 2008 – ongoing	KDE
6.4 Develop interventions component of ILP to inform instruction that meets individual student goals and needs (need objective to address grades 4-5)	6.4a Communicate to stakeholders how the ILP can be used as a data tool 6.4b Identify successful techniques for effectively layering in interventions over time and integrating family and afterschool interventions around important goals such as increased vocabulary development.	Spring 2009	KDE
6.5 Develop interventions based on gaps evident in data	6.5a Use multiple data sources to determine literacy gaps and develop interventions based on this data 6.5b Provide support to schools/districts in analyzing data 6.5c Assist schools/districts in knowing which interventions address gaps 6.5d Assist schools/districts in implementation of the interventions to address the gaps 6.5e Support districts in the use of formative and diagnostic assessments, including determining students reading levels in content areas, to inform instruction	6.5a Fall 2009 6.5b Ongoing 6.5c Spring 2009 6.5d Fall 2009 6.5e Spring 2009	

Support Structure

The support structure section includes instructional support as well as infrastructure. According to *Reading Next*, "Improving instruction, whether done by an entire school or a single teacher, can have dramatic effects on student achievement. However, improving school infrastructure to better support literacy teachers and students in addition to instructional improvement will reap the biggest rewards. Ultimately, change can occur from the top down, the bottom up, or the middle in, but truly effective and enduring change must include elements of both instruction and infrastructure."

Task Force Recommendations:
20. Require schools to develop literacy plans.
21. Utilize literacy and learning strategies as a component of Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (KTIP) observation protocols and experienced teacher standards.
22. Encourage involvement by administrators in team planning, implementation and monitoring of literacy plans.
23. Provide state level literacy coaches to work with schools and literacy coaches to improve literacy instruction.
24. Establish a literacy office that is responsible for organizing existing resources to form a cohesive support system for schools and districts, preschool through postsecondary.
25. Develop programs for parents and community members to become effective partners for literacy advancement.

Goal 7: Establish a systemic approach to meeting the literacy needs of districts, schools and students.

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
7.1 Publish Literacy PERKS to guide teams in literacy planning	7.1a Post Literacy PERKS revision on KDE literacy website and disseminate information about it to schools/districts through networks	Summer 2008	KDE
7.2 Increase current knowledge base of adolescent literacy among school and district administrators and teachers	7.2a Inform and train leadership groups on the use of Literacy PERKS 7.2b Provide literacy resources to administrators through principal certification programs, HSEs/DAGCs, and KDE web resources	7.2a Spring 2009 7.2b Spring 2009	KDE

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
7.3 Incorporate a leadership component in all KDE literacy grants and literacy grants through partner organizations	7.3a Revise grant templates to include a leadership component and include a requirement in all RFAs/RFPs	Ongoing	KDE
7.4 Position literacy specialists as state level literacy coaches	7.4a Work with the literacy specialists in their monthly planning meetings on adolescent literacy	Fall 2008	KDE
7.5 Reorganize KDE's language arts branch to accommodate a literacy approach	7.5a Work collaboratively among the writing and reading staff to address literacy concerns	July 2008	KDE
7.6 Collaborate with Family Resource/ Youth Service Centers and other agencies to provide parent workshops, information and resources	7.6a Disseminate literacy resources to FRYSCs consultants and staff across the state	Fall 2009	KDE
7.7 Include literacy tips for parents in the ParentINFO newsletters	7.7a Work with newsletter staff to include a monthly feature on literacy and 21st Century Skills	Fall 2008	KDE
7.8 Revise teacher and administrator evaluation instruments to include literacy	7.8a Revise KTIP observation instrument to include literacy 7.8b Include literacy and learning strategies component on evaluation instruments for all teachers and administrators	7.8a Fall 2009 7.8b Fall 2010	

Communication

Goal 8: Implement a communication plan for Kentucky's adolescent literacy work.

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
8.1 Collaborate across agencies to report status of adolescent literacy work	8.1a Establish a lead contact from each partner organization who will work with each organization and to be available to report to the KBE when needed 8.1b Submit semi-annual reports to Cindy Parker documenting the implementation of the KY Adolescent Literacy Work Plan, which will be shared with the KBE	8.1a Ongoing 8.1b quarterly beginning Winter 2008	All partners
8.2 Collaborate across agencies to produce an annual, data-based report on the state of adolescent literacy in KY.	8.2a Coordinate efforts across agencies to review adolescent literacy data, drop-out statistics, remediation, etc., on a regular basis	Ongoing	KBE KDE
8.3 Identify the role of partners in communicating the plan	8.3a Disseminate information from the plan to partners in a condensed version (bullet points) to make communicating ideas easier; include links for further information; include data and call to action, linked to goals specific to an audience 8.3b Work with partners to develop an evaluation tool to measure progress in promoting the message of the plan 8.3c Identify venues for presenting the plan on an annual basis (Chamber of Commerce meetings, Economic Development, conferences, etc)	8.3a Spring 2009 8.3b Spring 2009 8.3c Spring 2009	

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
	8.3d Identify key tie-ins to different sectors to show how they are affected by the problems associated with adolescent literacy skills and why they should be involved	8.3d Ongoing	
8.4 Identify the target audiences for the plan	8.4a Target audiences not represented by the task force partners (ex., Family Resource Centers) 8.4b Work with teachers, especially content-specific instructors, who work with task force partners, to get out the message of adolescent literacy needs 8.4c target who needs the information with the means to make actions happen that are not currently in place (ex., teacher preparation programs in literacy)	Fall 2008	
8.5 Identify what the target audience wants and needs to know	8.5a Share data and plan information such as • How KY compares to rest of nation and globally in literacy? • Where does the audience's region/community fit in the data and the plan? • What is the plan to improve adolescent literacy?	Fall 2008-Ongoing	
8.6 Identify the tools/resources needed by partners to implement the plan	8.6a Make available a number of resources so the partners can customize to their audience	8.6a Fall 2008	

Objective	Strategy/Activity	Timeline	Agency Partners Person Responsible
	8.6b Market results (including graphic design and video work; use student voices telling their stories) 8.6c include implications of what not implementing plan means (ex., data on costs of incarceration vs. education since we know literacy rates predict incarceration rates)	8.6b Fall 2009 8.6c Spring 2009	